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Thirteen Plus

A Comedy in Three Acts

By

GLADYS RUTH BRIDGHAM

*Author of "Bobbie Takes a Look," "The Hurdy Gurdy Girl,"
"Step Lively," "Honeymoon Flats," "The Thirteenth Star,"
"Captain Cranberry," "Behind the Scenes," "Leave it to
Polly," "At the Sign of the Shooting Star," "Not on the
Programme," "Sally Lunn," "A Case for Sherlock
Holmes," "Six Times Nine," "Just Plain Mary."*

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BOSTON

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Thirteen Plus

CHARACTERS

HENRY LOGAN, *a New York attorney, owner of the camp.*

THEODORA LOGAN, *his daughter.*

ELEANOR, *his wife.*

JUDGE KELCY

ETHEL, *his daughter*

DR. WAINWRIGHT

HELEN, *his wife*

ARNOLD JEFFREY, *in the employ of the government*

PHILIP CHANNING, *a popular writer of fiction*

FLORA, *the cook.*

MERIAM, *the table girl, Flora's niece.*

GEORGE, *a guide.*

MARIE LE BON.

} *Guests.*

SCENE.—Henry Logan's camp on the Bocquet
River in the Adirondacks.

ACT I.—An evening in August.

ACT II.—The next morning.

ACT III.—Two minutes later.



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OCT 26 '22

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No. 1.

STAGE SETTING

The scene is the main room in the camp. A stairway leads from the room center back. At the foot of stairs a little to the right is an exit. Fireplace left. Log fire. Entrance to camp at left front. In space between fireplace and stairway is a window. At right a counter. Stool back of counter. Telephone on wall back of counter. Table center of room. Chairs around table. On shelf under table magazines. Two packs of cards on table. A smaller game table and chairs near window. Armchairs in front of fireplace. Mounted heads on the wall over fireplace. A hanging center lamp, or reading lamp on center table.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

HENRY LOGAN, fifty, although a New York attorney is a typical woodsman; iron-gray hair and mustache; medium height; well built; has the appearance of being strong as iron.

THEODORA, his daughter; boyish type of girl; eighteen; bobbed hair.

ELEANOR, his wife; forty; healthy type of woman; used to outdoor life.

JUDGE KELCY, sixty; tall; slight; white hair.

ETHEL, his daughter; twenty-two; type of girl drawn by Christy.

DR. WAINWRIGHT, forty; prosperous city physician.

HELEN, his wife; thirty-five; society woman; brunette.

PHILIP CHANNING, thirty; attractive type expressing Americanism.

ARNOLD JEFFREY, thirty-five; short, black hair; rather overbearing in his ways.

FLORA, the cook; forty-five; Irish; stout; dark complexioned.

MERIAM, her niece; eighteen; small; blonde; very pretty.

GEORGE, twenty-two; tall; strong; well-built woodsman.

MARIE LEBON, French Canadian girl of twenty.

THEODORA wears a knicker suit for entire play. HELEN, ELEANOR and ETHEL wear linen dresses for ACT I, and for ACTS II and III ETHEL wears dark skirt and middy blouse, HELEN a knicker suit, and ELEANOR a heavy skirt and sweater.

FLORA wears striped percale house dress.

MERIAM, gingham for ACT I, and for ACTS II and III, plain blue dress with white apron.

MARIE wears knickers, and a coat and hat, supposed to belong to one of the guides.

MEN wear knicker suits all through, and GEORGE wears heavy corduroy suit.

Thirteen Plus

ACT I

SCENE.—*Evening at HENRY LOGAN's camp.*

(*At curtain* ETHEL KELCY and PHILIP CHANNING stand by the fireplace talking together. JUDGE KELCY sits in armchair near by with a newspaper, which he glances over as they talk. HELEN, ELEANOR and THEODORA sit around table, c. They have just finished a game of cards. DR. WAINWRIGHT sits at table back playing solitaire. All look toward HENRY LOGAN who stands R. C. back reciting.)

LOGAN.

“I wind about and in and out with here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout, and here and there a grayling,
And here and there a foamy flake upon me as I travel,
With many a silvery waterbrake above the golden gravel,
And draw them all along and flow to join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go, but I go on forever.”

(*They all applaud as LOGAN finishes.*)

JUDGE KELCY. Absolutely correct, Henry. That's what I call fittingly spoken.

DR. WAINWRIGHT (*looking at LOGAN in wonder*). You've been down river for supplies, fished, hiked and

been on the move since six-thirty this morning. Don't you ever feel tired?

LOGAN. So seldom that I am hardly acquainted with the sensation.

HELEN (*to ELEANOR*). How do you ever stand such a husband?

ELEANOR. It is wearing at times, I'll admit. I have such a feeling of being about a day and a half behind.

DR. W. You do surprisingly well at keeping up. Doesn't she, Ted?

THEODORA. Yes, indeed. Mother is wonderful.

KELCY. We all echo that, Mrs. Logan.

LOGAN (*laughing*). Such a fuss about nothing!

ELEA. (*reproachfully*). Henry! And I was feeling quite overwhelmed!

(The ladies turn to their cards. DR. WAINWRIGHT comes forward and joins LOGAN near counter.)

DR. W. Where does the new camper hail from, Henry?

LOGAN. Jeffrey? From New York City. I don't know much about him. He is a friend of Dave Hanson's. That should be recommendation enough.

(DR. WAINWRIGHT and KELCY nod.)

THEO. He is a good scout. He was out with us fishing all the afternoon.

HELEN. Maybe he is, Ted, but I think he is too disagreeable for words.

ELEA. Yes. So do I. He is.

THEO. (*laughing*). Well, can you beat that? You only saw him at dinner. Condemned without a hearing.

ELEA. Not without a hearing.

HELEN. I should say not. That man is never present without a hearing.

DR. W. Ah! Now we have the ladies' prejudice. Jeffrey talks too much.

ELEA. It's silly, I know, but I had the queerest feeling about him when he came in this noon. What is he, Henry?

LOGAN. He follows the same profession as your distinguished husband, my dear. He is a lawyer.

DR. W. And he writes.

CHANNING (*turning to DR. WAINWRIGHT with interest*). Does he? What for?

DR. W. I'm not sure. For "Everyman's" anyway. I read an article by him last month.

HELEN. What on?

DR. W. Prohibition.

KELCY (*with interest*). Is that so? I must look it up.

CHAN. For "Everyman's," of course?

DR. W. Yes. A splendidly written article.

KELCY. I shall be glad to see something of the young man.

ELEA. (*with a shrug*). You are welcome to him.

(ARNOLD JEFFREY *enters, L.*)

KELCY. Good-evening, Mr. Jeffrey.

JEFFREY. Good-evening (*Looks from the JUDGE around the room.*) everyone!

ALL. Good-evening.

THEO. (*in a quick aside to HELEN and ELEANOR as JEFFREY turns to KELCY*). Talk about angels!

JEFF. It is going to be a wonderful night.

KELCY. Yes. How do you like camp, Mr. Jeffrey?

JEFF. (*stands talking to the JUDGE*). I'm in love with it.

LOGAN (*with a cautious glance at KELCY*). The Judge is strong on Prohibition.

DR. W. And death on rum runners. He has stirred up considerable feeling in certain directions.

KELCY (*looking across to LOGAN*). Henry, how near did you say this camp is to the Canadian line?

LOGAN. Eight miles.

JEFF. Only eight miles? Good location for certain kinds of (*Hesitates.*) sport.

(*The guests glance at LOGAN and look uneasily from one to the other.*)

DR. W. (*with an awkward laugh*). Well, just how do you want us to take that?

JEFF. (*hastily*). Just as I said it. Surely you didn't think there was any personal thought in my mind?

LOGAN. Certainly not. Never dreamed of such a thing.

DR. W. (*turning quickly to the ladies*). Well, ladies, what is the score?

THEO. Oh, your wife wins.

HELEN. Yes, I believe I do. I have thirteen plus.

(*Pauses.*)

ETHEL (*stepping forward surprised*). Thirteen plus?

LOGAN (*looking at HELEN curiously*). Did we understand aright?

JEFF. A very odd score, Mrs. Wainwright.

HELEN. Oh, that isn't the score. (*Picks up slip of paper.*) Thirteen on this slip plus (*Takes up another slip.*) thirteen on this. (*Looks up surprised.*) That is odd.

ELEA. Oh, I wouldn't sleep for a week if I had anything like that happen to me. One thirteen is bad enough. But two of them!

HELEN (*laughing*). I should worry. Thirteen is my lucky number.

THEO. How about the camp-fire? Everybody out?

ALL (*rising*). Yes! Surely. Lead us to it!

THEO. We will have to initiate Mr. Jeffrey. (*Turns to JEFFREY.*) Stand in front of me. I'll steer you.

JEFF. (*stepping in front of THEODORA*). All right. I am game for anything, Miss Logan.

THEO. Good! I foresee that you are going to be a good camper. You lead, Father.

LOGAN. All right. Come, Judge! (*JUDGE KELCY stands back of LOGAN and the guests all stand in line, CHANNING alone remaining by the fire. Each guest puts his hands on the shoulders of the one in front and they march around the room keeping time with the lines they repeat. LOGAN, getting the time.*) Left, left, all ready!

ALL. Left, left, left his wife and fourteen children, up by Jingo! (*On the last three words they change feet.*) Right, right, right for his country! Up by Jingo! Left, left, etc.

(LOGAN leads them around room and leaves the line as they reach door, L. They exeunt laughing. LOGAN exits by stairs.)

(CHANNING goes to center table. Spreads out some manuscript, takes out pen and begins to write. He suddenly stops, drops pen on table, shakes his head, tears the paper he has been writing on, sits looking across at the fire and nervously snapping his fingers, suddenly gives a satisfied "ah," takes up pen and begins to write rapidly.)

(If desired the lights may be turned out to emphasize the break in the story, then let them come slowly on, revealing CHANNING at the table writing and LOGAN coming down the stairs. In the distance a man's voice is heard singing a popular song.)

LOGAN (as he reaches the foot of stairs). You here, Phil? I thought everyone was out around the camp-fire.

CHAN. That's right. Everyone but me. I am having a little camp-fire of my own.

LOGAN. Aren't you coming out?

CHAN. (wrathfully). No!

LOGAN (laughing). Don't then! Stay in!

CHAN. That's the damnable part of the writing game. You promise a manuscript at a certain time, and then you have to work your brain whether you want to or not.

LOGAN. Is there ever a time that you want to? I never see you working your brain until you have to.

CHAN. You bet you don't. But I'm not alone. It's queer but the most of us seem to do our best work under pressure.

(There is the sound of laughter and cheers in the distance.)

LOGAN (smiling as he listens). Unusually hilarious to-night.

CHAN. I don't see anything unusual about it. Just the same every night. We never lose our pep up here. Something in the air, I guess. For heaven's sake go out

and leave me to my misery. I'm coming close and draw inspiration from the flames.

(He crosses to armchair by fire.)

LOGAN. Hope you have a good time.

CHAN. *(as LOGAN exits, L.)* Hope you choke!

LOGAN *(outside)*. Thanks!

(CHANNING turns the light out. Room is lighted by fire only. He sits in front of fire and begins to write. FLORA enters, R. She stands listening for a second. CHANNING is sitting back to her and she does not see him. She goes to counter, takes leather mail bag, brings it to center table and begins to look the mail over. CHANNING watches her for a second.)

CHAN. Well, Flora?

FLORA *(with a gasp)*. Glory be to God, sir! How yez sthartled me!

CHAN. What are you looking for?

FLORA. My niece, Meriam.

CHAN. *(rising and going to her)*. Did you expect to find her in the mail bag?

FLORA *(confused)*. No, sir. What I mint, sir, wuz I come in ter see if Meriam wuz here and I wuz jist afther lookin' fer one of thim postal cards of the camp. I asked Misther Logan if I could hev wan ter sind to me sissther Illen.

CHAN. I see. *(Closes the bag and puts it on mantel.)* What you want is over here.

(Goes to counter and opens box. It is rather dark by counter. He uses a flashlight. FLORA follows him to counter. While they stand back to, MARIE LE BON steps cautiously in through window, takes bag from mantel, removes package of mail, puts bag on mantel, steps out of window again.)

FLORA. I'm sorry to be afther troublin' yez, sir.

CHAN. That's all right. *(Hands her a card.)* This is what you want, isn't it?

FLORA. Yis, sir. You haven't seen Meriam, sir?

CHAN. No, I wouldn't be likely to. I have been sitting here working for some time.

FLORA. Shure, she don't hisitate to come in here whin she gits the chance. An' I don't loike it at all, at all. Those that ain't in yez class hed better know their place and use sinse and kape outer trouble.

CHAN. (*smiling*). I haven't the least idea what you are talking about, but it listens good.

FLORA. Shure, I knows what I'm talkin' about all roight, all roight, and I'm tillin' yez there's some quare goin's on in this camp and they ain't no good thot'll come of it.

CHAN. Oh, for heaven's sake don't invite trouble that way. Haven't you found out yet that we're going to get what we are looking for and to be on the safe side we must always be looking for good instead of bad?

FLORA. Shure, whin things begin ter happin jist remimber whot I've been tillin' yez. [*Exit, L.*]

CHAN. (*calling after her*). Cheerful cherub!

(CHANNING *sits by fire, begins to write.* ETHEL *enters, L.*)

ETHEL (*breathlessly and somewhat cautiously*). Philip!

CHAN. (*rising*). Ethel! What is it? (*Goes to her.*) Why, you are trembling, dear. What has happened? Tell me!

ETHEL. Phil, will you help me without asking any questions?

CHAN. Of course I will.

ETHEL. You will trust me always no matter what happens?

CHAN. (*simply*). My dear, haven't I asked you to be my wife?

ETHEL. Hush! I'm always afraid Father will be somewhere near.

CHAN. Ethel, how much longer must we go on like this?

ETHEL. Oh, I don't know. Not for long, I hope, but

Father can't know now. (*Looks towards door.*) I must hurry back. I'll be missed.

CHAN. What is it you want me to do?

ETHEL. You are alone here?

CHAN. Yes. Even Flora has gone out.

ETHEL. Then you can use the telephone without anyone hearing. I want you to send a telegram for me. You can get the Central Office at Upper Lake until nine, you know. (*CHANNING nods.*) Go up to my room. In the leather case in the right-hand corner of the upper drawer in the dresser you will find a slip of paper with a New York telephone number. Oh, don't look at me that way, Phil!

CHAN. (*trying to speak lightly*). But all this sounds rather mysterious, you know.

ETHEL (*with a half sob buries her face on his shoulder*). Oh, Phil!

CHAN. (*his arm around her*). My dear, forgive me. I know you are serious. I wasn't laughing. I was only trying to encourage you. The message you want me to send?

ETHEL. Just two words—thirteen plus.

CHAN. (*repeating*). Thirteen plus. (*Suddenly.*) Why, Ethel, that was what Helen ——

ETHEL (*interrupting*). Phil, you promised to help without questioning. I don't know why Helen used those words. I only know this message must be sent. You won't fail me?

CHAN. You know that I will not.

ETHEL. And after you send the message you will forget?

CHAN. I promise.

ETHEL (*putting her arms around his neck for a second*). I won't try to tell you what I feel.

(*Exit, L. CHANNING goes to window, looks out, returns, looks at his watch, starts towards stairs. JUDGE KELCY enters, L.*)

KELCY. Where's Ethel?

CHAN. I don't know.

KELCY. You lie!

CHAN. (*taking a step forward*). Judge Kelcy! (*Stops.*) What are you trying to do? Deliberately pick a quarrel with me?

KELCY. I saw her come over here.

CHAN. (*draws a long breath*). You are an older man. We will let it pass.

KELCY (*sneeringly*). You don't mean it? Is my daughter in her room?

CHAN. (*sits by fire and takes up his work*). Why don't you go up and look?

KELCY. Not worth while. If she was up there you wouldn't be so willing for me to go up and look.

CHAN. Oh, I don't know. I haven't any right as yet to interfere between you and Miss Ethel.

KELCY. As yet? As yet? I suppose that means that you think some day you will have the right.

CHAN. I didn't say that.

KELCY. Well, let me tell you, young man, you'll never live to see that day.

CHAN. (*quietly*). Why should we quarrel, Judge?

KELCY. We won't if you will let Ethel alone.

CHAN. What is your objection to me?

KELCY. Haven't any. You are a good clean chap as far as I know, and a smart one, and you are making money. But I have other plans for my daughter and I intend to see them carried out. So be warned. Stay out of this if you don't want trouble. [*Exits, L.*]

(CHANNING *goes on writing for a few seconds, listens, goes to window, to door, finally exits by stairs. GEORGE enters, R., stands listening for a second, takes a pipe from his pocket; as if knocking the ashes from pipe he strikes the pipe on table once, pause, three times, pause, once, long pause, repeats the signal; it is answered from wall back of stairs; slight pause. MARIE enters by window.*)

GEORGE. All right, Jim?

MARIE (*pulls up her hat*). Jim ees no come.

GEORGE. You, Marie? Where is Jim?

MARIE. Jim ees seeck. He ver' seeck. He come in las' night an' he get fever. Hees head swim all ze time. Marie will do all Jim do. He tell Marie what to do.

GEORGE. You've got it through?

MARIE. Yes, and now ees ze real danger. Who come in to-day?

GEORGE. A lawyer named Jeffrey. Seems all right.

MARIE. Everytheeng all right so far. Jim fear ze Judge.

GEORGE. Yes, it beats the devil that he should come up here for his vacation, but I should worry. We'll pull it off under his very nose!

(MERIAM enters, L.)

MERIAM. Coast is clear. There is no one in the house at all. Why, Marie! Are you here?

MARIE. I come. Jim ees seeck. I do hees part.

MER. Well, I would rather it would be you than me. For heaven's sake be careful.

GEORGE. Don't worry. Leave it to us.

(GEORGE and MARIE exeunt, L. MERIAM goes to window; kneels by window, looking cautiously out; there is the sound of a revolver shot; a woman screams. GEORGE rushes in, L.)

MER. (*frantically, hurrying to him*). What is it? What have you done?

GEORGE. I haven't done a thing. I don't know what has happened.

MER. Where's Marie?

GEORGE. I don't know. She is taking Jim's place. She will have to look out for herself. Come on, quick! We will get as far from here as possible.

(*Pulls her out, R. They exeunt just as CHANNING comes down the stairs. He sees door, R., close, and rushes down the stairs and exits, R.*)

LOGAN (*outside*). Keep away! Keep the women away! Now, doctor!

(CHANNING hurries in, R., just as HELEN enters, L., followed by ELEANOR with ETHEL.)

ELEA. (leading ETHEL to chair). Be brave, dear.

CHAN. What is it? What has happened?

HELEN. Oh, I'm faint. I—I'm going to faint.

ELEA. No—no; don't do that. (*Looks uncertainly from HELEN to ETHEL.*) Whatever you do, don't faint.

(ELEANOR gets HELEN some water.)

CHAN. (*impatiently*). What is it? What has happened?

ETHEL (*with a shudder, burying her face in her hands*). Father——

CHAN. (*anxiously*). Yes?

ELEA. Judge Kelcy has been shot.

CHAN. (*appalled*). Shot? (*Starts for door.*)

ELEA. It is no use to go out. Henry and the doctor are with him.

CHAN. But where—how—how could——

ELEA. We don't know. We can't imagine.

HELEN. And that Mr. Jeffrey is just as unpleasant as we knew he could be.

ELEA. Yes, you never saw anything like it. He was telling everybody what to do. (THEODORA enters, L.) Ted!

ETHEL. Father? Is he——

THEO. Can't tell yet, Miss Kelcy. They are going to try to take him into the doctor's cabin. I want another flashlight and a lantern.

ELEA. } (*together*). I'll get the lantern. Here's

CHAN. } the flash.

(ELEANOR exits, L. CHANNING hands THEODORA a flashlight from counter.)

THEO. Please telephone to the lumber camp. We've got to get some men on the job at once. (CHANNING goes to telephone, as ELEANOR enters, R., with lantern. THEODORA lights lantern.) Keep your courage up, Mother.

ELEA. If there is anything I can do —

THEO. I'll let you know. I don't believe there is anything. Dr. Wainwright is the only one who can do anything for the Judge. We need real woodsmen if we are going to chase the — (*Stops as she glances at* ETHEL.) See you later. [*Exit, L., hastily.*]

CHAN. (*at telephone*). Hello! This is Channing. Send every man you can up here. There has been an accident and we want all the help we can get. Yes. (*Turns, goes to ETHEL, leans over her; the others turn away.*) You know, dear, I'll do everything in my power.

ETHEL. I do know, Phil. Thank you.

CHAN. I am going out.

(*Starts L. JEFFREY enters, L.*)

ALL. Oh, Mr. Jeffrey! The Judge? Anything new?

JEFF. Nothing to tell yet. They have just taken him into the cabin. The doctor couldn't do much while he was on the ground and by lantern light. (*As CHANNING moves towards the door.*) Where are you going, Mr. Channing?

CHAN. (*shortly*). Out.

JEFF. I must request you to remain here.

CHAN. (*surprised*). What do you mean?

JEFF. I am sorry, but I must place you under arrest.

ALL. Arrest? Mr. Channing?

ETHEL (*rising*). What do you mean?

CHAN. (*warningly*). Ethel, please. (*To JEFFREY.*) By what authority are you acting, if I may inquire?

JEFF. Certainly. (*Opens coat and shows CHANNING a button.*) Satisfy you?

CHAN. (*looking at him wonderingly*). I am afraid it will have to. Just what is your reason for my arrest?

JEFF. You were not at the camp-fire.

CHAN. No, I was right here.

JEFF. Everyone not at the camp-fire will be placed under arrest.

HELEN. Isn't this terrible? How early can I get away from this camp in the morning, Eleanor?

ELEA. (*vaguely*). Why, I don't know. Perhaps nine or —

JEFF. No one will leave camp. I shall have to detain you all right here.

HELEN. Well, did you ever? Do you mean to say that we will have to stay here as long as you choose to keep us?

JEFF. I regret to say such is the case.

HELEN (*breaking down*). Isn't he—a—a—perfect monster?

ELEA. (*disgusted*). Phil, can he really do this?

CHAN. He certainly can, but (*Turns to JEFFREY.*) I think you are somewhat officious. You might at least have waited for Mr. Logan to take the initiative.

JEFF. Mr. Logan knows and approves.

CHAN. Pardon me, Mr. Jeffrey. I have nothing more to say. I am your prisoner.

HELEN. Well, I have more to say. I think this is an outrage and I am not anybody's prisoner.

JEFF. I didn't say that you were, Mrs. Wainwright.

HELEN. I'd like to know what the difference is. You said I was detained and I can tell you right now —

(THEODORA *enters*, L.)

THEO. Miss Kelcy, will you come, please?

ETHEL. Father?

THEO. I don't know. Father said to come for you. That is all I know.

ETHEL (*turning to JEFFREY*). Mr. Jeffrey, Mr. Channing is the man I am going to marry. I want him with me.

JEFF. I am very sorry, Miss Kelcy. I can't permit Mr. Channing to leave this house.

CHAN. (*walks to door with ETHEL*). Never mind, dear. Be brave. (*She exits with THEODORA. CHANNING turns to JEFFREY.*) I don't understand your attitude. Why do you place such restrictions upon me?

JEFF. You may as well know now as any time. The shot was fired from this house. You are the only one known to be in the house.

CHAN. I see.

ELEA. Why, I believe you are trying to make it out that Philip Channing shot Judge Kelcy.

HELEN. That's just what he is doing. (*To JEFFREY.*) I really hate to say it right to your face, but the occasion demands it. You are no gentleman.

CHAN. Thank you, Mrs. Wainwright. I appreciate that, but Mr. Jeffrey is quite within his rights.

JEFF. (*to CHANNING*). And I appreciate that.

ELEA. (*to JEFFREY*). How do you know the shot was fired from this house?

JEFF. Location of the bullet, and position in which the Judge was found.

ELEA. Phil, didn't you hear or see anyone in this house?

CHAN. I am not sure that I want to talk.

JEFF. I advise you to tell all you know and the absolute truth.

CHAN. H'm. Thanks. I'll think it over.

THEO. (*outside*). Go on in.

FLORA (*entering, L., followed by THEODORA*). Shure and whot is the matter wid yez?

THEO. (*to JEFFREY*). Prisoner for you. She wasn't at the camp-fire and she was wandering around outside.

JEFF. Who is she?

ELEA. (*quickly*). Our cook.

JEFF. (*to FLORA*). What have you been doing outside?

FLORA. Looking for my niece.

ELEA. I believe that is true. Meriam gives her aunt a good deal of cause for anxiety.

FLORA. Shure yez nivir shpoke truer words than thim, Mrs. Logan.

JEFF. Do you know what has happened?

FLORA. No, sir, not at all, at all.

JEFF. Judge Kelcy has been shot.

FLORA. Shot? The Judge? The poor man! Saints presarve us. Is it dead he is?

JEFF. No, but we are afraid — (*Stops abruptly.*) What about this niece of yours?

(MERIAM and GEORGE enter, L.)

FLORA. Shure, here she is now.

GEORGE. One of the lumber men said you wanted us inside.

JEFF. Yes. Where have you been this last half hour?

GEORGE (*promptly*). Walking, and sitting on the boat-house steps.

JEFF. You know what has happened?

GEORGE. Yes, sir. We were just told.

JEFF. You have been together all the time this last half hour?

GEORGE. } (*together*). Yes, sir.
MER. }

JEFF. Have either of you heard or seen anything unusual going on around here this evening?

GEORGE (*to MERIAM*). Go on and tell him.

MER. I—I heard Judge Kelcy in here.

JEFF. Yes. Go on.

MER. He—he was talking with (*She looks at CHANNING half in triumph, half in hate.*) with Mr. Channing about—about Miss Ethel Kelcy. The Judge threatened Mr. Channing.

JEFF. Oh, he did?

MER. Yes, sir. I heard him say you'll never live to see the day. He was very angry.

JEFF. And what about Mr. Channing?

MER. (*glances uneasily at CHANNING*). Well—he ———

CHAN. Tell the truth, Meriam, if you know how.

MER. Mr. Channing was calm. I heard him say—"We'll let it pass—you're an older man," or something like that.

JEFF. You couldn't repeat the whole conversation?

MER. No, sir. I only got a little here and there. The Judge says Mr. Channing can never marry his daughter.

JEFF. (*to CHANNING*). Is this true?

CHAN. Yes, sir, it is.

JEFF. (*JEFFREY'S liking for CHANNING increases and*

his distrust of MERIAM with every answer. To MERIAM). How did you happen to be listening?

MER. I wasn't listening. I was waiting for George to go for a walk.

CHAN. (*turning to her*). Is that so? Waiting for George? Mr. Jeffrey, this conversation wasn't fifteen minutes ago. She was waiting for George and yet they claim they have been together all the time for the last half hour.

JEFF. (*to GEORGE and MERIAM*). You are both under arrest.

MER. (*frightened*). Arrest? Oh, Aunt Flora!

FLORA. Yez needn't be looking ter me fer sympathy. I've been tillin' yez nothin' good wuz comin' of yer trap-sin' around wid these guides. Where's Jim?

JEFF. Who is Jim?

GEORGE. He is another guide.

ELEA. He hasn't been in camp all day, Mr. Jeffrey. He went up the river yesterday with a camper from Upper Lake.

JEFF. That lets him out.

(LOGAN and ETHEL enter, L.)

CHAN. Ethel!

(*Goes to her. She turns to one side as if to avoid the others. He stands with his arm about her.*)

LOGAN. Jeffrey! Do your utmost. Spare no one.

ELEA. (*breathlessly*). Henry! The Judge?

LOGAN. Judge Kelcy—has gone.

(*There is a general exclamation of sympathy from all.*)

CHAN. (*turns to LOGAN*). Didn't you find anything about him? Anything to work on? Any kind of a clue?

LOGAN. The only unusual thing was a slip of paper in his hand.

CHAN. Yes!

LOGAN. On the slip of paper were two words.

CHAN. May we know what they were?

LOGAN. Thirteen plus.

(HELEN gives a piercing scream and faints; they
gather around her.)

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*The same as in Act I. The next morning. It is a dull gray day.*

(At the rise of the curtain GEORGE stands alone by the fireplace in an attitude of dejection, his arms on the mantel, his head on his arms. MERIAM enters, R., and gives a quick look about.)

MERIAM. George! *(He turns quickly. She comes forward and speaks cautiously.)* Any word from Marie?

GEORGE. No.

MER. What are we going to do?

GEORGE. Keep cool and do the innocent act.

MER. I am so frightened. There is going to be an examination of everyone in camp. I hate that Mr. Jeffrey.

GEORGE. Everything points to Channing, and your hearing his conversation with the Judge gives a motive.

MER. But he is innocent. We can't let ——

GEORGE *(interrupting)*. They will find it out later and by that time we will be safe.

MER. *(with a shiver)*. Goodness knows, I hope so! I must go back to the dining-room. I'll be missed. You had better let Aunt Flora give you your breakfast. The hearing is going to be right after.

GEORGE. All right.

(Follows MERIAM out, R. Slight pause. MARIE looks in at window, withdraws. CHANNING enters, R., goes to window, looks out, quickly withdraws, hurries to counter, kneels back of it so he can just see what takes place. MARIE cautiously steps in through window, takes a revolver from pocket and hides it back of logs in fireplace. She steps out window, closes window. CHANNING steps forward, waits a

few seconds, then in a casual way goes to window, opens it, looks out. JEFFREY enters, R.)

JEFF. Where's your appetite this morning, Channing?

CHAN. (*still by window*). Disappeared with yours. Another mystery added to our already overcrowded list.

JEFF. What do you see out there? Anything special?

CHAN. No. I was just thinking about our case. It wouldn't be possible for anyone to enter here without a ladder, would it?

JEFF. (*joins CHANNING and looks out of window*). Of course not. Unless they could fly. (*Turns away.*)

CHAN. (*smiling*). That is the way it seemed to me.

JEFF. Channing, I like you. I hope we can prove that you had nothing to do with this affair.

CHAN. Thanks. Hope we can.

JEFF. You are a great success at figuring out these mysteries in fiction, why don't you try your hand at a reality?

CHAN. Truth is known to be stranger than fiction. I am afraid I should find myself on an unknown sea.

JEFF. You have some corking ideas in your stories. I don't know just how practical they would prove to be.

CHAN. Try them out some time. You have my full permission.

JEFF. (*laughs*). I'll take you at your word.

(*He exits by stairs. HELEN and ELEANOR enter, R., followed by THEODORA and DR. WAINWRIGHT.*)

ELEA. (*to CHANNING*). Ethel hasn't come down yet?

CHAN. No. (*ELEANOR turns to stairs.*) I think Jeffrey has just gone up to talk with her.

(*ELEANOR turns back.*)

HELEN. Oh, such a night! I never slept a wink.

ELEA. (*goes to window*). Whoever opened this window? It's dismal and cold and damp and I'm cross.

(*Slams the window down.*)

HELEN. I object most decidedly to this examination we are expected to go through.

DR. W. (*looking at her anxiously*). Why, Helen?

HELEN. Because I do. What right has Mr. Jeffrey to take charge here?

CHAN. Every right in the world, Mrs. Wainwright. He represents the United States Government.

(LOGAN *enters*, R.)

HELEN } (*together*). He does?
ELEA. }

LOGAN. Yes. Mr. Jeffrey came up here for a particular purpose.

ELEA. Did you know it?

LOGAN. No, I didn't dream of such a thing. He is quite within his rights in taking charge as he has. He has sent to New York for the other officials usually called in such a case.

(*Goes to counter and takes up mail bag.*)

THEO. We'll have to submit with as good a grace as possible.

LOGAN (*with an exclamation of astonishment*). Who has touched this mail bag?

ALL (*with exception of CHANNING*). I haven't. Not I.

CHAN. (*quickly*). What has happened?

LOGAN. No mail in the bag.

(JEFFREY *comes down the stairs followed by* ETHEL.)

ALL. What?

JEFF. How much did you have there last night?

LOGAN. A whole package. Probably thirty letters or more.

JEFF. All right. That goes with the rest of the evidence. Call your help, please.

(THEODORA *exits*, R.)

ELEA. (*goes to* ETHEL). Good-morning, dear.

(*All greet* ETHEL. *The ladies sit near fireplace.* DR. WAINWRIGHT *stands back of* HELEN'S chair. LOGAN *sits on stool back of counter.* CHANNING *starts to cross to* ETHEL.)

JEFF. Not now, Mr. Channing. (*CHANNING turns away and goes to counter. He stands leaning back against counter. THEODORA enters and stands near CHANNING. FLORA and MERIAM enter, R., followed by GEORGE. JEFFREY places a chair for FLORA near right entrance. MERIAM stands by her. GEORGE crosses back and stands near window. JEFFREY takes table center.*) Now, Dr. Wainwright! (*DR. WAINWRIGHT steps forward.*) There is no doubt in your mind about the bullet being fired from this house?

DR. W. Not the slightest. I am certain about that.

JEFF. Where was it fired from?

DR. W. There are three possibilities.

JEFF. Yes?

DR. W. This window here, the window above it and the roof outside the up-stairs window.

JEFF. (*nods*). And which do you think the most likely?

DR. W. The window up-stairs or the roof. This window is possible but not probable.

JEFF. Mr. Channing! (*CHANNING steps forward; DR. WAINWRIGHT steps back.*) Were you in this house when the shot was fired?

CHAN. I was.

JEFF. In this room?

CHAN. No, sir.

JEFF. Where were you?

CHAN. In the hall up-stairs.

(All are surprised.)

JEFF. What were you doing?

CHAN. Nothing.

JEFF. Indeed? Why were you up there?

CHAN. I can't tell you.

JEFF. You won't tell me, you mean?

CHAN. I mean just what I said. I can't.

JEFF. Do you realize the position you are in?

CHAN. I certainly do.

JEFF. Your cabin is outside the house. What possible errand could you have up-stairs in this house?

CHAN. I have told you I can't answer.

ETHEL (*suddenly rising and coming forward*). Mr. Jeffrey, he went to my room. I asked him to.

JEFF. (*turning to her*). Indeed? Where were you?

ETHEL. You know I was out at the camp-fire.

JEFF. You left the camp-fire and came over here. Why didn't you go to your room yourself?

ETHEL. There wasn't time.

JEFF. (*musingly*). Wasn't time? You mean you were afraid your father would miss you?

ETHEL (*hesitates a second*). Yes, that is what I mean.

JEFF. And he did, and came to look for you, and so met his fate.

CHAN. Do you think it was necessary to say that?

(CHANNING *starts to go to* ETHEL.)

JEFF. I am conducting this examination. You stay right where you are. (CHANNING *turns away*.) Now, Miss Kelcy, why did you ask Mr. Channing to go to your room?

ETHEL. That I cannot tell you.

JEFF. You mean, will not?

ETHEL. Yes. Will not.

JEFF. And you have pledged Mr. Channing to secrecy?

ETHEL. Yes, I have.

JEFF. Very clever, Miss Kelcy.

ETHEL. What do you mean? Don't you believe me?

JEFF. (*turns to CHANNING with an exasperating smile*). Mr. Channing, after we went out to the camp-fire were you alone here?

(ETHEL *returns to her chair*.)

CHAN. Alone in this room.

JEFF. Who was in the house?

CHAN. Mr. Logan and Flora. If anyone else was here I didn't see them.

JEFF. But those two you did see?

CHAN. Yes, sir. Mr. Logan passed through on his way to the camp-fire and Flora was looking for her niece.

JEFF. Which way did they enter the room?

CHAN. I didn't see them come in.

JEFF. Then either one might have come down the stairs?

CHAN. It is possible.

JEFF. The next to enter was Miss Ethel?

CHAN. Yes, sir.

JEFF. She didn't go up-stairs?

CHAN. She did not.

JEFF. But she asked you to go?

CHAN. She did.

JEFF. After she left, Judge Kelcy came and you quarreled with him?

CHAN. It wasn't exactly a quarrel.

JEFF. But he refused you his daughter and said you would never live to see the day she would be your wife?

CHAN. Yes, that is true.

JEFF. Immediately after this, the Judge left, you went up-stairs and the Judge was shot, in all probability from an up-stairs window. You will have to admit this looks pretty bad for you.

CHAN. Couldn't be much worse.

JEFF. Now, you say when the shot was fired you were standing in the hall up-stairs doing nothing. Just what do you mean?

CHAN. I was standing outside Miss Kelcy's door. I had just come from her room.

JEFF. Why were you standing there?

CHAN. I was looking at something.

JEFF. Don't you think you had better tell what you were looking at?

CHAN. Maybe I had. From where I was standing I could see the up-stairs window and standing on the roof outside the window was —— (*Hesitates.*)

JEFF. (*quickly, while the others all lean forward*). Yes?

CHAN. A woman.

ALL. A woman?

(*HELEN screams. JEFFREY turns and looks at her.*)

JEFF. (*turning to CHANNING*). This is most surprising, Mr. Channing.

CHAN. That is what I thought at the time.

JEFF. Will you go on and tell what happened?

CHAN. I heard the shot and rushed down-stairs.

JEFF. (*incredulously*). Leaving a woman on the roof?

CHAN. The shot sounded to me as if it was in this room. I thought it was more important to find out about that, so I —

JEFF. (*interrupting*). Now wait! You say the woman on the roof didn't fire the shot?

CHAN. No, I didn't say that. She might have. The Lord only knows what she was doing there, but it sounded to me down here.

JEFF. Did you hear anyone down here?

CHAN. Yes, sir.

LOGAN. You did?

JEFF. (*turning to LOGAN*). I am conducting this hearing. (*To CHANNING*.) Now then, what did you hear?

CHAN. Voices.

JEFF. (*exasperated*). Would you mind telling a little on your own account? And it is your own account. I hope you realize that fully.

CHAN. I am fairly bright, I think. What do you want me to say?

JEFF. (*sharply*). How many voices? Did you recognize them?

CHAN. Two voices and I did recognize them.

ALL (*very much excited*). You did? Who were they?

(*General confusion.*)

JEFF. (*pounding on table*). Will you people keep out of this? (*To CHANNING*.) Whose voices did you hear?

CHAN. (*coolly*). I have no idea of telling you.

ALL. What? Mr. Channing! Are you crazy?

ETHEL. Oh, Phil!

LOGAN. For heaven's sake, Channing!

JEFF. (*again pounding on table*). Will you people be silent? (*To CHANNING*.) Mr. Channing, surely you —

CHAN. You will waste time if you go any further on that line.

JEFF. Is that so? I'll make you talk before I get through. What about the woman on the roof?

CHAN. I don't know what became of her. I forgot about her.

JEFF. You saw a woman on the roof and forgot about her! My God!

CHAN. For a few minutes. There was so much excitement, and please remember that it was Miss Kelcy's father who had been shot. When I finally remembered what I had seen up-stairs, of course there was no woman on the roof.

JEFF. Can you give me a description?

CHAN. About Miss Kelcy's build. Dark skirt and middy blouse.

JEFF. Fortunate for Miss Kelcy that she went immediately to the camp-fire.

CHAN. Otherwise I shouldn't have mentioned the woman on the roof.

JEFF. You didn't see her face?

CHAN. I did not.

JEFF. That will do for the present, Mr. Channing. (CHANNING *steps aside*.) Now, Flora! (FLORA *comes forward*.) Where were you?

FLORA. Whin?

JEFF. When Judge Kelcy was shot?

FLORA. I wuz down near the lumber camp.

JEFF. How do you know you were?

FLORA. Shure, an' don't yez shuppose I know where I am at?

JEFF. Did you hear the shot?

FLORA. Saints be praised I did not.

JEFF. How do you know, then, where you were when it was fired?

FLORA. Go awan wid yez! Yez afther tryin' ter git me goat!

JEFF. (*sharply*). Answer my question!

FLORA. I wint ter camp and whin I come back Miss Theodora told me ter come in here, and yez told me your-

silf the Jedge wuz shot, God rist his soul, and it wuz while I wuz gone it happined and I only wint ter the lumber camp, and it's a blissin' from Providence I did go, so I'm not mixed in this at all, at all, the Saints be praised and ——

JEFF. Wait a minute! Wait a minute! Why did you go to the lumber camp?

FLORA. Lookin' fer Meriam.

JEFF. Did you see her?

FLORA. No danger!

JEFF. Did you see anyone at all?

FLORA. I did.

JEFF. Who was it?

FLORA. I don't know at all, at all!

JEFF. Will you please be more explicit?

FLORA. Will yez plase talk United States?

JEFF. Was it a man or woman?

FLORA. A woman.

JEFF. Where did you see her?

FLORA. Coming up from the lumber camp.

JEFF. And you didn't recognize her?

FLORA. It wuz dark and she hed on an outin' hat pulled over her eyes. I thought it wuz Miss Kilcy, but she didn't seem ter want ter spheak so I wint roight along about me own business.

JEFF. How was she dressed?

FLORA. A dark skirt and a middy blouse. I wuz jist afther thinkin' whin Misther Channing mintioned the lady on the roof ——

JEFF. (*nods*). Yes, it seems to fit. Where did she go?

FLORA. I don't know. I thought it wuz Miss Kilcy and I niver took no notice.

JEFF. I see. Well, I guess that is all you can do for us now. Meriam, I'll talk with you.

MER. (*stepping forward*). Yes, sir.

(*She assumes a pert, "I should worry" attitude.*)

JEFF. You went out walking with George last evening?

MER. Yes, sir.

JEFF. Where did you go?

MER. Down by the river first and then sat on the boat-house steps.

JEFF. And then?

MER. And then came back this way, and then went down to the lumber camp. And it was when we come back here that I heard the Judge and Mr. Channing. George left me to get his flashlight.

JEFF. That isn't just what you said last night.

MER. Well, you see, George wasn't gone but two or three minutes, so we really were together all the time just as I said.

JEFF. You have that nicely rehearsed. Can George say it as well as you can?

MER. Sir?

JEFF. That's all for you now, but don't think for a minute that you are fooling anyone but yourself. (MERIAM *tosses her head and turns away.*) Mrs. Wainwright! (HELEN *steps forward. Her attitude is one of resentment.*) What is the meaning of thirteen plus?

HELEN. If it has a meaning I don't know what it is.

JEFF. It would really be wise for you to be candid with me, Mrs. Wainwright.

HELEN. I am. It was my score, just as I told you. If there is anything more to it, why, it is purely coincidental!

JEFF. And you fainted over something purely coincidental?

HELEN. I fainted from hysteria.

DR. W. (*steps forward*). I sincerely believe that, Mr. Jeffrey. Not because it is my wife. I would say the same of any of the other ladies if they were in a similar position.

JEFF. Did you ever see your wife faint that way before?

DR. W. No, I never did, but she has never before been concerned in anything of a serious nature.

JEFF. Is she subject to hysteria or fainting spells?

DR. W. (*reluctantly*). No, she isn't, but —

JEFF. That's enough on that for the present.

DR. W. But I would like ——

JEFF. (*interrupting*). I said enough.

DR. W. (*turns away*). Oh, very well.

JEFF. Mr. Logan, what were you doing up-stairs just after we went out to the camp-fire?

LOGAN (*stepping forward*). Who says I was up-stairs?

JEFF. I do.

LOGAN. Indeed? And if I say I wasn't?

JEFF. That wouldn't go a great way with me. I know that you were.

LOGAN. Indeed?

JEFF. What were you doing in Miss Kelcy's room?

ETHEL (*surprised*). My room?

JEFF. (*shows LOGAN a watch charm*). This is yours?

LOGAN. Yes—but ——

(*Hesitates, gives a quick glance at ELEANOR.*)

JEFF. But what?

LOGAN. Nothing.

ELEA. He hasn't been wearing that charm. He was afraid he would lose it in the woods and he gave it to me. I have been wearing it on my neck chain.

JEFF. Were you in Miss Kelcy's room yesterday?

ELEA. No, I was not. I don't believe I have been in her room for a week.

JEFF. How do you account for my picking this up in her room?

ELEA. I don't account for it. The charm has been missing since yesterday morning. I have no idea where I lost it.

JEFF. Miss Kelcy, you didn't pick up this charm and take it into your room?

ETHEL. No. I don't recall that I ever saw the charm before.

JEFF. Well, that will do for now. How many of you people own guns? (*The men step forward. Also ETHEL and THEODORA. JEFFREY takes a number of revolvers from his pockets and places them on table.*) Identify these.

(As the men stand around the table, ELEANOR speaks to the ladies, shivers and turns to the fireplace as if suggesting a fire.)

LOGAN *(points to a gun and then to another)*. Mine! And mine.

CHAN. *(takes one)*. Mine.

THEO. Here is mine. *(Takes it from her pocket and hands it to JEFFREY. He examines it.)* I had it with me yesterday when we went out in the woods.

GEORGE *(takes his from pocket and shows it to JEFFREY)*. Mine. Always with me.

DR. W. *(points to one on table)*. That is mine.

ETHEL. Mine isn't here. I will go up-stairs and ——

JEFF. You don't need to. There are no guns up-stairs. Yours isn't here?

ETHEL. So it seems.

JEFF. When did you last have it?

ETHEL. I haven't used it since I came.

JEFF. Where did you keep it?

ETHEL. In a case on my dresser.

JEFF. Am I to understand that somebody took it without your permission?

ETHEL. If it isn't up-stairs they certainly did.

JEFF. Your father?

ETHEL. Had his own. He wouldn't touch mine.

ELEA. *(suddenly)*. Mr. Jeffrey! Come here!

JEFF. *(rising quickly)*. What is it?

ELEA. *(points into fireplace)*. Look there!

(JEFFREY goes to fireplace, kneels and takes out revolver.)

JEFF. A gun. *(Examines it.)* E. C. K. Miss Kelcy, is this yours?

ETHEL. Yes, it is.

JEFF. *(sternly)*. How does it happen to be in such an unusual place?

ETHEL. Good gracious, I don't know. You don't suppose I put it there?

JEFF. I'm not supposing anything. I'm trying to get

at facts. (*Examines gun.*) There's a cartridge gone. Dr. Wainwright, is this the kind of gun —

(*Hands it to DR. WAINWRIGHT.*)

DR. W. (*examines gun*). Yes, it is.

JEFF. Then without a question Miss Kelcy's gun is the one which was used.

ETHEL (*with a shudder*). Oh!

(*There is silence for a second as they all look their sympathy for ETHEL.*)

JEFF. Mrs. Logan, did you know that gun was there?

ELEA. (*indignantly*). Mr. Jeffrey!

JEFF. It's very odd you should discover it just at the opportune moment.

ELEA. Yes, it is, I'll admit, but it just happened. We are cold, and I was just telling Helen we would ask George to light a fire. Just as I leaned forward I saw it there.

JEFF. Mrs. Logan, a charm which you were wearing is found on the floor in front of Miss Kelcy's dresser. Her gun, which was on the dresser, is missing. You find the gun in a peculiar hiding-place just at the psychological moment.

ELEA. But you know I was at the camp-fire.

JEFF. I know you didn't fire the shot, but you may have been an accomplice to the one who did.

LOGAN (*stepping forward*). See here, Jeffrey, do you accuse my wife —

JEFF. (*interrupting*). I am not accusing anyone yet, but she may have been an accomplice to you, for instance. You are known to have been up-stairs just before the Judge was shot. How are we to know you didn't go in Miss Kelcy's room and take her revolver? This examination is over for the time being. I want some time to myself. I'll call you together later. Oh, one other question. Did anyone beside Flora and Mr. Channing see the mysterious lady of the roof? (*No one speaks.*) Very well.

ELEA. Are we permitted to go outside at all?

JEFF. Yes. The lumbermen are acting as a guard and they will allow you within certain limits. The piazza, the yard, the tennis court, the quoit field are all at your disposal as usual.

THEO. As if anyone would play games!

(Telephone rings. LOGAN starts to answer.)

JEFF. I'll take the message.

(Goes quickly to telephone.)

LOGAN *(turns away)*. As you like.

JEFF. Hello! Yes. Mr. Logan's camp. *(Turns to ETHEL.)* Telegram for Miss Kelcy. *(ETHEL steps forward.)* "Deepest sympathy." Signed — "Knox." *(ETHEL gives a quick look towards CHANNING.)* All right. *(Hangs up receiver, turns to ETHEL.)* How is it possible for anyone to be sending you a message of sympathy?

ETHEL *(helplessly)*. Why—I—I—don't know.

JEFF. *(wrathfully)*. Well, somebody knows. Who has sent a telegram for Miss Kelcy?

(Looks suspiciously at CHANNING.)

CHAN. Not I, Mr. Jeffrey, not but what I would if she had asked me and such a thing had been possible.

LOGAN. Well, such a thing hasn't been possible. You can see that for yourself, Mr. Jeffrey.

JEFF. I can't see anything of the kind. I can see it has been possible. What I can't see is how! I spent the night in this room and no one was allowed out of the house. Somebody is damned clever, but I'll match him before I get through. *(To ETHEL.)* I suppose it is useless to ask you who Knox is?

ETHEL. Yes, it is, quite, because I don't know.

JEFF. *(disgusted, turning to the others)*. Sa-ay—do I look or act like a natural born idiot?

(No one speaks. HELEN giggles.)

HELEN. Don't all speak at once!

ELEA. (*with a sarcastic smile*). We are at liberty to break up this pleasant little gathering?

JEFF. You are.

(HELEN and ELEANOR talk together. FLORA and MERIAM *exeunt*, R. GEORGE follows. THEODORA speaks to LOGAN and then exits, L.)

CHAN. (*to JEFFREY*). May I have a few words with Miss Kelcy?

JEFF. As many as you like. Hope you'll talk a little sense to each other.

CHAN. (*smiling*). I am not sure that is one of the possible things but we'll do our best.

ELEA. (*to HELEN*). Are you going out, Helen?

HELEN. Yes, I want some air.

(HELEN exits, L., followed by DR. WAINWRIGHT. ELEANOR goes up the stairs. JEFFREY exits, L.)

LOGAN. Of course, I don't have to tell you, Channing, that all the circumstantial evidence in the country wouldn't influence my opinion against you.

CHAN. Thanks. I felt sure of you. (LOGAN exits by stairs. CHANNING goes to ETHEL.) My dear, you are so wonderfully brave. I haven't words to tell you how proud I am of you.

ETHEL. Phil, dear!

CHAN. And you still trust me?

ETHEL. You know that I do. Phil, why did you tell me that you didn't send my telegram last night?

CHAN. I didn't send it.

ETHEL. But, Phil, this message that just came is the answer.

CHAN. (*bewildered*). The answer? To the telegram you wanted me to send? But, my dear——

ETHEL (*faintly*). Phil, if you didn't send it, then there is someone else, who—knows.

(*Sways forward into his arms.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*The same as in ACT II. Two minutes later.*

(At curtain ETHEL is in armchair. CHANNING is kneeling beside her. She has a glass in her hand from which she drinks from time to time as they talk.)

CHAN. All right, dear?

ETHEL. Yes, it was just for a minute. I didn't know I was so weak.

CHAN. Weak? I wouldn't mind being weak in the same way. *(Rises and speaks decidedly.)* Now see here, Ethel, you will have to tell me more about these mysterious messages.

ETHEL. I can't.

CHAN. But how am I going to help you if you keep me so completely in the dark?

ETHEL. I don't know. It isn't sensible, but I believed you could; that you would see it.

CHAN. Good Lord! See what?

ETHEL. My father has enemies. Have you thought what kind they were likely to be?

CHAN. Oh, yes, everyone in camp realizes that. I have had it in mind all the time but so far it hasn't led me anywhere.

ETHEL. Do you think it is wise to withhold the names of those whom you heard in this room?

CHAN. I haven't the least idea who was in this room.

ETHEL. But you said ——

CHAN. Yes, I baited a trap.

ETHEL. You mean ——

CHAN. I heard voices but I didn't recognize them. If the owners of the voices are still in camp I bet I'll know within half an hour.

ETHEL. Yes, that is likely. Phil, what do you think about Helen?

CHAN. I think it is probably true that she is nervous.

ETHEL. And that is all?

CHAN. I can't say certainly, of course.

ETHEL. I wish I knew.

CHAN. You know so many purely circumstantial things happen that when the evidence is piled up it is always a question which is which.

ETHEL. Things are terribly tangled.

CHAN. I'll say they are.

ETHEL. Mr. Jeffrey didn't seem much disturbed about the mail.

CHAN. Apparently not. You can't tell what he really thinks.

ETHEL. I wish I knew what you think.

CHAN. I don't know myself. I really haven't had time to think. Things have happened so suddenly that I believe we have all neglected the power of thought.

ETHEL. I wish you would match your wits against Jeffrey's. Oh, Phil, if you could only take me out of this!

CHAN. Go up-stairs, dear, and rest. Leave me here alone to think.

ETHEL. Are you sure, Phil, you saw a woman on the roof? Couldn't it have been a man? You only saw the outline. It seems so unreasonable.

CHAN. It was a woman. She screamed when the shot was fired. A good reason for eliminating her from crime. She didn't fire and then scream.

ETHEL. But, Phil, we are all accounted for. There are no other women around here.

CHAN. You heard what Flora said.

ETHEL (*wearily*). I know. It seemed to fit, but, oh, it seems so ——

(Shudders and buries her face in her hands.)

CHAN. Try to forget everything for a while, and let me see what I can do. If I need you for anything I will call you.

ETHEL. I will be within call. Phil, I feel sure you are going to do it.

CHAN. Good! You just hold on to that thought.

(Puts his arm around her and leads her to stairs.)

ETHEL. And you will take care of yourself.

CHAN. Leave it to me! Don't you worry about that.

ETHEL *(suddenly slips her hand into her skirt pocket and takes out a small revolver. She hands it to CHANNING)*. Here!

CHAN. *(astonished)*. Ethel! Surely you don't think this is necessary?

ETHEL. I don't want you to be unprotected and Mr. Jeffrey has yours.

CHAN. He has all in camp except the guide's. Where did you get this?

ETHEL. It is father's. He doesn't need it now.

CHAN. *(putting his arms around her)*. My dear! *(She goes up the stairs. He examines the revolver, puts it in his pocket, sits down by table, buries his face in his hands, rises, goes through pantomime of what happened, goes from table to fireplace, turns to table, goes to counter and gets mail bag, brings it to center table, takes it to mantelpiece, turns away, then suddenly turns with an exclamation of satisfaction, speaks under his breath.)* Marie, again! But how—where?

(Goes to window and looks out. Turns away puzzled, returns mail bag to counter, walks about room, hands in pockets, thinking deeply. MERIAM enters.)

MER. *(timidly)*. Mr. Channing! I wanted to see you. It—it was good of you.

CHAN. *(cautiously)*. Was it?

MER. I wouldn't have told what I heard if I'd known you'd be so good about telling on us.

CHAN. Your testimony against me was rather a neat little job.

MER. I—I hated you.

CHAN. Because I caught you stealing and told you

some truth about yourself. You should have been grateful that I didn't hand you over to Mr. Logan.

MER. (*half crying*). I'm awfully sorry.

CHAN. Meriam, you are just an overgrown child.

MER. (*indignantly*). Child? I'm going to be married.

CHAN. Married? Well, I only hope you and George won't spend your honeymoon behind the bars.

MER. (*getting hysterical*). You—you—oh, I can't stand it to have you talk like that.

CHAN. (*harshly*). Stop that nonsense! Your aunt has warned you times enough.

MER. George is all right. He ain't done a thing. Oh, won't you help us, Mr. Channing? You didn't tell you heard us, and I thought—— Oh, I wish we were dead.

CHAN. (*putting his hand on her and shaking her*). Now stop. Stop this minute! Do you hear me? If you are a woman about to be married, obey me, and help the man you love. If you're a child unable to do anything but howl, by all the powers that be, I'll give you something to howl for and make you obey! Now, how about it?

MER. (*struggling to get control of herself*). I want to help George. I been trying to all the time.

CHAN. It was more Jim's fault?

MER. It's all his fault. George ain't done a thing.

CHAN. Draw it mild, Meriam.

MER. He ain't, Mr. Channing! He ain't.

CHAN. You realize it's dangerous business?

MER. I know it and I tried to keep George out. They tempted him with the money, and we want to be married and—— (*Hesitates.*)

CHAN. I see. How many with Jim?

MER. I don't know. Some of the lumbermen.

CHAN. Lumbermen? (*Laughs.*)

MER. Oh, how you can laugh!

CHAN. That's a darned good one. The lumbermen are acting as a guard for Jeffrey. Er—Meriam— (*Speaks slowly, feeling his way.*) Jim's sweetheart, Marie, was in here last night——

MER. (*with a gasp*). You know everything, don't you?

CHAN. I'll say I do, and if you know what's good for you and George, you will answer my questions. What did Marie come for?

MER. She came for Jim to bring George the key.

CHAN. The key? Oh, yes! Yes—yes, certainly—the key.

MER. But George never went in. You see things happened so quick he didn't get there. He was going to, but he—didn't.

CHAN. You make it so clear, Meriam. Where was Jim?

MER. Jim is in bed with a fever.

CHAN. Oh, yes. So George didn't use the key? (*Suddenly turns to MERIAM.*) Meriam, do you know where the door is?

MER. No, sir, they never let me know, but I don't think it's far away.

CHAN. Very well. Now you find George and bring him here at once. Don't speak a word of what has passed between us. If you want me to save you, obey my orders.

MER. Yes, sir. (*Starts towards door, R.*)

CHAN. Oh, Meriam, what about that charm of Mr. Logan's?

MER. (*turning back*). I picked it up. I was going to give it to him but when I lost it I didn't dare to say anything about it, 'cause I thought he wouldn't believe me. I had it in my pocket and it must have dropped out when I was doing Miss Kelcy's room.

CHAN. I wish I thought so.

MER. It's so, Mr. Channing. It's so. I haven't taken a thing since that day you talked to me. I hated you. I think I hate you now, but what you say is true, and you frighten me to death, and I wish you'd scare George the same way.

CHAN. (*laughs*). Bring him in and I will try it. Send your aunt to me.

MER. But I don't want Aunt Flora to —

CHAN. (*sharply*). Do you intend to do as I say?

MER. Y-Y-Yes, sir.

(*Exits, R. CHANNING again walks to window, opens it, leans out. FLORA enters, R.*)

FLORA. Did yez want me, Misther Channing?

CHAN. Yes. What did you see from the roof last night?

FLORA. And what are yez talking about?

CHAN. That will do, Flora. I recognized you last night. The nice little story you told to Jeffrey about meeting a woman on the way to the lumber camp was a fairy tale invented to turn suspicion from yourself. There was no woman, and you didn't go near the lumber camp. Now come on. I know you didn't shoot Judge Kelcy, but do you know who did?

FLORA. I do not, saints be praised.

CHAN. And no idea why they did it?

FLORA. I hev not. The poor auld man, God rist his soul!

CHAN. Flora, how did you get on the roof? You didn't go through this room.

FLORA. Shure and hev I said I wuz on the roof?

CHAN. Flora, I am trying to help Meriam and George out of a dangerous position. Now let's have the truth.

FLORA. How do I know yez ain't tryin' ter trick me? (*CHANNING suddenly takes out revolver and points it at her.*) Glory be to God, sir, point that the other way!

CHAN. Not until you unload what's on your mind. How did you get onto the roof?

FLORA (*terribly frightened*). I climbed up from the outside.

CHAN. A likely story. (*Comes closer with the revolver.*) The truth!

FLORA. That's the truth. Mr. Channing, sir, shuppose it should go off?

CHAN. (*calmly*). There would be one less Flora on earth, so you'd better be careful. How did you get to the roof?

FLORA. There is some steps cut in the logs as nate as you plase.

CHAN. (*excited*). Really? In this wing outside this window?

FLORA. Yis, sor.

CHAN. How did you find it out?

FLORA. Saw someone going up.

CHAN. Who?

FLORA. I don't know.

CHAN. (*warningly*). Flora!

FLORA. I don't, Mr. Channing, if thot wuz me lasht word on earth. It wuz a guide, or wan uv the lumber-min but it's dark ez a pocket in thot corner uv the house and I could jist see his figure. It wuz whin I wint out lookin' fer Meriam.

CHAN. (*nods*). Yes. How in the deuce did you find the steps in the dark?

FLORA. I hed a little flashlight wid me.

CHAN. I see. Why did you go up? Why didn't you come in here for me or hunt up Mr. Logan?

FLORA. I koind o' thought it wuz George, and I thot Meriam moight be up there, and whot they could be afther doin'! Holy Saint Patrick, Mr. Channing, I've been out o' me hid entoirely this summer about thot girl! She's no mother nor no one at all, at all, and she's thot pretty and silly!

CHAN. You've said something. I understand, Flora, and you have my sympathy. I think we can pull her through this and if she hasn't had something to sober her this time, I miss my guess.

FLORA. Well, saints be praised if it's so.

CHAN. Now tell me what happened.

FLORA. Nothing happined on the roof at all, at all. I wint in the window up-stairs but there wuz nobody up there and jist afther I wint out the shot wuz fired, and it seemed loike it wuz jist underneath me.

CHAN. And you screamed?

FLORA. Saints be koind I did! I wuz thot scared. I wint down on me knees and said sivin prayers, and they a-runnin' around down there below and all the ex-coitemint. Shure it wuz a tirrible noight all together.

CHAN. And what about the mail, Flora?

FLORA. Shure, I wuz lookin' ter see if Meriam wuz afther writin' to a feller up to the city I don't trust at all, at all.

CHAN. And you didn't touch the mail bag afterwards?

FLORA. No, sir.

CHAN. That's all right, Flora. I am sure you are telling the truth. That is all. Thank you.

FLORA. You're wilcome, sor. [Exits, R.]

(CHANNING sits down, buries his face in his hands. There is a faint knocking on the wall the other side of the stairs; one—three—one; pause. It is repeated. At first CHANNING doesn't notice, then he suddenly springs to his feet, listens, counts the knocks.)

CHAN. (*under his breath*). One—three—one ——— (*Is greatly excited. Goes to wall, listens, goes to window, looks out, then returns to stairs, goes part way up, calls softly.*) Ethel! Ethel!

(*Slight pause. ETHEL comes down-stairs.*)

ETHEL. Yes, Phil!

CHAN. You weren't asleep?

ETHEL. Asleep when you might need me?

CHAN. Ethel, do you feel all right now? Got your nerve all with you? Can you do anything I ask of you?

ETHEL. I not only can, but will.

CHAN. You don't know all that's going on, Ethel? You have only a vague idea?

ETHEL. I really know very little. Have you ———

(*Hesitates.*)

CHAN. I guessed at something and I am putting up the bluff of my life. I have scared the truth out of Meriam.

ETHEL. Oh, you have? I'm so glad, Phil. Now you understand why I wanted you to send the telegram.

CHAN. (*staggered*). Well, I'm not sure that I fully comprehend your part in the affair.

ETHEL. Why, I did it to help Meriam. She appealed to me to save George. I was so sorry for them. We thought if I could get the message through and get the officers here to break the thing up before George got into it, you see, and not let Father know. George would never get any mercy from Father. And Meriam warned me of the danger Father was in; surrounded as he was by these men who hate him. And then, of course, I couldn't go back on her after she came to me as she did. Don't you see?

CHAN. I think I do. Now you stand by me and follow my lead.

(MERIAM and GEORGE enter, L.)

GEORGE. You want me, sir?

CHAN. Yes. (*Suddenly points gun at him.*) Hands up. You're my prisoner.

MER. (*with a cry*). Mr. Channing!

CHAN. (*sharply*). That will do for you! I don't want a word out of either of you. Ethel, get me some rope. Enough to hang two rascals. (ETHEL exits, R. To GEORGE.) Walk over to the counter. (GEORGE obeys.) Put both hands on the counter. Now if you move a quarter of an inch it will be your last move. (*Takes GEORGE'S gun from his hip pocket.*) Huh! Jeffrey let you keep your gun! Now walk over to the table and sit down. (GEORGE sits by table. ETHEL enters with rope.) That's it. Here, Ethel. (*Hands her a gun.*) Take this. Keep him covered. You know how to use it?

ETHEL. I certainly do. George knows that I do.

CHAN. Very well. If I say fire, you obey.

ETHEL. All ready.

(ETHEL keeps GEORGE covered while CHANNING ties him to chair.)

CHAN. I shall have to gag you for a few minutes.

GEORGE (*desperately*). What for? I won't talk. I promise.

CHAN. (*takes a handkerchief from his pocket*). Can't take the chance.

GEORGE. All right. Go ahead. You needn't force it.

CHAN. Glad you have so much sense. (*Gags GEORGE.*) You might be tempted to give a warning when you find what I am going to do. Now don't make a sound, Ethel. (*Goes to wall back of stairs. Raps, one—three—one. Pauses, repeats; there is a pause, then knock is answered from other side.*) Now quick, Ethel, the other piece of rope. Now keep your nerve.

MER. (*wildly*). Mr. Channing! Please!

CHAN. (*turning on her*). Stand over there by the door. Out of sight of the window. If you speak another word until I speak to you, I'll gag you, too. Perhaps I had better anyway. (*Starts for her.*)

MER. (*shrinking back against door, L.*). No—p-please! I promise!

CHAN. Ethel, stand back by the stairs.

(*ETHEL steps back and CHANNING moves a chair in front of GEORGE so that he cannot be seen from window. THEODORA enters, L. Stops and regards them in astonishment.*)

THEO. Good Lord! What in the world——

CHAN. (*warningly*). Hush! Quick! Stand against the door! Out of sight. (*THEODORA grasps the idea and obeys. CHANNING steps out of sight. MARIE looks cautiously in, carefully opens window, steps in; she is instantly confronted by CHANNING.*) Hands up! Walk forward. (*MARIE bewildered obeys. Removes her hat.*) You, is it? Jim didn't get to the party after all.

MARIE (*suddenly sees GEORGE*). Mon Dieu!

CHAN. That won't do a bit of good. The Deity isn't going to help you on an occasion like this. Ethel, keep her covered. Miss Logan, take my gun and keep them all covered from the other side. (*THEODORA takes gun from CHANNING. CHANNING takes MARIE'S gun from coat pocket.*) Now take off your coat.

MARIE (*astonished*). M'sieu?

CHAN. Don't try to talk. Obey. (*MARIE removes coat.*) Now sit by table opposite George.

(MARIE sits opposite GEORGE. CHANNING ties her to chair.)

MARIE (*to* GEORGE). So you tell? You, or Meeream.

CHAN. We don't care about any remarks on your part. I hate to gag a girl but I'll do it if you speak again. Miss Logan, get everyone in here. Don't tell them what has happened. Just bring them in.

THEO. (*delighted*). Ay, ay, sir!

(*Salutes and runs out, L.*)

CHAN. Ethel, cover everyone who comes in here. Don't let anyone leave the room when they are once in.

ETHEL (*anxiously*). Where are you going?

CHAN. Onto the roof, and into the room under the roof as soon as I can find the entrance.

(*Puts on coat which MARIE removed.*)

ETHEL. Won't you be seen by any of the lumbermen?

CHAN. The man who is in sight of this angle of the house is without question one of the gang. (*Pulls MARIE'S hat over his eyes.*) With this hat and coat I'll take the chance. (*Climbs out window.*)

ETHEL (*anxiously*). Be careful, won't you?

(*Follows to window and looks out.*)

CHAN. (*outside window*). Leave it to me. Careful is my middle name.

ETHEL (*turns from window and looks thoughtfully at wall back of stairs*). Is there anyone in there now? (*Turns quickly to MARIE and GEORGE.*) Answer me! Is there? (MARIE glares at her. GEORGE shakes his head no.) Thank you, George.

MER. I am so sorry, Miss Kelcy, I got you in so much trouble when you was trying to help us.

ETHEL. Never mind that now. You at least are not to blame for what has happened.

(ELEANOR and LOGAN come down the stairs.)

LOGAN (*in astonishment*). Ethel! Good Lord!

(HELEN enters, L., followed by THEODORA and DR. WAINWRIGHT.)

HELEN (*screams*). Ethel!

(*General confusion. All talk at once. JEFFREY enters, L.*)

JEFF. (*looks about in astonishment*). What is it? For heaven's sake, Miss Kelcy! What is the meaning of this?

ETHEL. Listen!

(CHANNING *knocks from other side of stairs.*)

JEFF. (*counting*). One—three—one. Thirteen plus! Who is it?

ETHEL. It's Phil!

LOGAN (*astonished*). Where is he?

ETHEL. Back of the stairs.

LOGAN. Why, he can't be.

ETHEL. Oh, but he is!

JEFF. How do you enter?

ETHEL. From outside. (JEFFREY *starts for door followed by LOGAN.*) Gentlemen! My orders were for everyone to remain in this room.

JEFF. But, Miss Kelcy —

ETHEL (*hysterically*). As sure as you stir one step I fire!

HELEN (*delighted*). Hurrah! He's been the boss long enough.

JEFF. Will you permit Dr. Wainwright to leave? You know what I want him to do?

ETHEL (*hesitates a second*). Yes. I am quite sure that will be all right.

(DR. WAINWRIGHT *exits, L.* CHANNING *looks in window.*)

CHAN. (*with a cheerful grin*). Hello, Jeffrey!

JEFF. (*hurries to window*). Channing! What the deuce? (*Looks out.*) Steps in the logs!

CHAN. Here. That's what! Here! Take this.

(Hands two bottles to JEFFREY. JEFFREY examines them with interest. CHANNING climbs in window.)

JEFF. You found the place?

CHAN. Well, rather! *(Takes the bottles from JEFFREY, places them on table, one in front of MARIE, one in front of GEORGE.)* Ladies and gentlemen, Marie and George invite you to their party. Really Jim invites you, but in his absence Marie, his future wife, will act as hostess. They have the finest collection of bottled goods I have ever gazed upon, and not a drop of home brew in the lot.

ALL *(at the top of their voices)*. Where?

CHAN. *(laughing)*. Come early and avoid the rush!

LOGAN *(impatiently)*. You know what we mean.

CHAN. *(seriously)*. In the open space under the roof, back of the stairs. The entrance is just under the roof. Mighty clever. Must have taken months of work. Logs are hollowed out to hold pints and quarts, and any other old size. Logan, you are strong on the defense but I think you may have to go some to prove you didn't know anything about this.

LOGAN *(half laughing)*. Lord! I don't know but you've said something.

JEFF. Channing, I take off my hat to you. You have certainly given us a surprise party, but I believe I can match you. Ladies and gentlemen, let me present to you the guest of honor.

(JUDGE KELCY enters, L.; followed by DR. WAINWRIGHT. KELCY'S arm is in a sling. All the women but ETHEL scream and there is general confusion.)

KELCY. No cause for so much excitement. I am not a spirit. I am very much alive.

LOGAN. What is the meaning of this? *(To DR. WAINWRIGHT.)* Why did you tell us Judge Kelcy was dead?

DR. W. I never did. I said he had gone.

JEFF. And so he had. Into the doctor's cabin, and very fortunately for our sense of veracity you announced the news just as we gave it to you.

LOGAN (*somewhat dazed*). I guess that's right.

JEFF. Of course we couldn't let Miss Kelcy think her father was dead but she is the only one who knew.

LOGAN. For heaven's sake, Judge Kelcy, explain just a little.

KELCY. Certainly. (*As KELCY explains, CHANNING unties the ropes which bind MARIE and GEORGE and removes gag from GEORGE.*) I knew Jeffrey before I came up here. It was planned that he should come. We have known for some time there was a clever gang of rum-runners up in this region and a place known as "thirteen plus" was the beginning of the chain. We never dreamed until the last day or two that this was "thirteen plus." Jeffrey found that some goods had been brought over the line two or three days ago and when the attempt to kill me was made, we thought if we let them think they had carried out their plan, we might have a better chance to see what was going on.

CHAN. I think you have made one mistake. Marie, did you intend to kill Judge Kelcy? Did anyone intend to kill him? Come on. Tell a straight story. It will help you and Jim as nothing else can.

MARIE. No one inten' kell ze Judge. Marie was under ze roof and ze gun go off accident. I didn' know ze Jedge he is zere.

CHAN. I believe that. And how did you happen to have Miss Kelcy's gun?

MARIE. Someone follow Marie. I left my gun in ze lumber camp an' I step in one of ze room and take anuzer gun.

CHAN. And it happened to be Miss Kelcy's. And oh, yes! (*Takes package of mail from pocket.*) Here's the mail. She had it in the next room. (*To MARIE.*) You were taking that to Jim so he could see if the Judge was sending any dangerous information through the mail.

MARIE. M'sieu ees right.

CHAN. There is one thing I want to know. Who sent out the telegram last night?

KELCY. I did.

JEFF. (*disgusted*). It's a pity you hadn't mentioned it.

KELCY. I forgot it.

CHAN. And the answer that came in to-day?

KELCY. Means "on the way." We will be surrounded by officials by this time to-morrow.

JEFF. The rest of the gang? George and ——

CHAN. No, not George. Some of your lumbermen who are acting as guards.

JEFF. What? Keep Marie confined until I round up the rest of the gang. [*Exits, L., followed by LOGAN.*]

KELCY. Come, doctor, I'm anxious to see that room.

DR. W. So am I! [*They exeunt, L.*]

ELEA. I feel just as if I was living in a movie.

HELEN. How did you ever do it, Mr. Channing?

CHAN. It's a long story and I'll tell you some other time. (*Goes to ETHEL.*) Just now I have a little story for this young lady alone.

THEO. (*teasingly*). Oh, come on! Don't be mean! Tell us the secret, too.

CHAN. Just this much. This is the beginning (*Kisses ETHEL.*) and there's going to be Thirteen Plus!

[CURTAIN, *for a minute.*]

(*When curtain rises again, it is bright sunlight.*)

CHANNING sits at center table leaning forward, his head on his arms asleep. Breakfast bell rings. He doesn't stir. MERIAM enters, R., with bell, goes to door, L., rings bell. As she returns she notices CHANNING and stops by table.)

KELCY (*coming down-stairs*). Hurry, people! I smell ham and eggs.

JEFF. (*following*). That's good news.

(ETHEL comes down the stairs.)

KELCY. What's the matter, Meriam?

MER. I don't know, sir. (DR. WAINWRIGHT, HELEN, LOGAN, ELEANOR and THEODORA enter, L.) It's Mr. Channing, I think.

LOGAN (*coming forward*). Good Lord! Did you stay up all night, Phil?

(*Puts his hand on CHANNING'S shoulder and shakes him.*)

ALL. Phil! Mr. Channing!

(*Gather around table. MERIAM exits, R.*)

CHAN. (*sitting up and looking around bewildered*). Yes? Why, what's the matter?

KELCY. Didn't you go to bed at all?

CHAN. Why, it's morning, isn't it?

ALL. It certainly is.

THEO. Can you beat that?

CHAN. No, I didn't go to bed. (*Points to manuscript.*) It's finished! Do you hear, you people? Finished!

ALL. Really? In one night?

ETHEL. What's it about, Phil? What is the title?

JEFF. May we look?

CHAN. Certainly.

ELEA. (*taking up manuscript*). Thirteen Plus.

HELEN. Philip Channing, does anyone ever know what you'll write about next? I demand a royalty.

CHAN. In that case there won't be much left for me, for you are everyone in the story even to Meriam, George and Flora.

ALL. Really? Won't that be interesting?

HELEN. When is it coming out?

THEO. What in?

CHAN. "Everyman's" for October.

LOGAN. Put in your orders in advance.

CHAN. Judge Kelcy, I have had a terrible night with you. I suppose this is unusual but I am still under the illusion of the night. I want to marry your daughter. What do you say?

KELCY. Good Lord! This is so sudden. What does she say?

ETHEL (*turning away*). Phil, how could you?

LOGAN. My friends, this is no place for us. (*Re-*

cites.) "Charge, Chester, charge! (*Points to door, R.*) On, Stanley, on! And let who will be clever! (*Points to CHANNING.*) That boy stands on a burning deck, but we go on forever!" [*They laugh and exeunt, R.*]

KELCY (*stops at door*). Bless you, my children! Phil, I'd sooner have you for my son than any boy I know.

CHAN. (*joyfully*). Thank you. (*Turns to ETHEL.*) Don't be cross, dear! I couldn't wait another minute.

KELCY (*exits, R.; sticks his head in door*). Er—ah—ahem—do you care for anything as plebeian as ham and eggs?

CHAN. (*puts his arm around ETHEL and leads her to door, R.*). Do we? Well, I'll say we do!

CURTAIN

STEP OUT—JACK!

An Optimistic Comedy in Three Acts.

By Harry Osborne

A successful vehicle for talented amateurs. Twelve males (can be played with less), five females. Costumes modern. Scenery, three simple interiors. Jack Rysdale is "down and out." All he has in the world are the clothes on his back and the love in his heart for the wealthy and beautiful Zoe Galloway. He dare not ask her to marry him until he has made his way in the world. Zoe loves him, and while the girls in New York do nearly everything else, they do not propose—yet. Jack's fighting spirit is about gone when he meets a man named Wilder, who is a natural fighter and knows how to bring out the fighting qualities in others. From him Jack learns that he has a dangerous rival in Percy Lyons. He learns that if he is going to get anywhere in this world, he can't stand in line and await his turn but must step out and "go get it." He learns more from Wilder in ten minutes than he absorbed in a whole year in college. So, figuratively speaking, he steps out, takes the middle of the road and "gives 'er gas." Once started, nothing can stop him until he has attained his object. Every girl will fall in love with Jack and every man and boy will admire his pluck and courage. Zoe is a matrimonial prize on fourteen different counts, and her chum, Cynthia, a close second. Wilder is a regular man's man who can convince any one who doesn't wear ear muffs that black is white and vice-versa. Then there is Percy Lyons, who never stayed out very late, Clarence Galloway, a rich man's son looking for a job, Buddie the office boy, who is broken-hearted if he misses a ball game, and Bernice Williams, who thinks she is a regular little Home Wrecker but isn't. An artistic and box office success for clever amateurs.

Act I.—Private Office of R. W. Wilder.

Act II.—Library—John Galloway's Home.

Act III.—Rysdale's office.

TIME: The present.

PLACE: New York City.

Time of playing: Approximately two hours.

Price, 50 cents.....Royalty, \$10.00

THE SHOW ACTRESS

A Comedy in One Act.

By J. C. McMullen

Two males, four females. Costumes, country of the present day. Playing time about forty minutes. Scene, dining-room of the Martin Homestead, Hillville, Vt. A burlesque troupe is stranded in the little village of Hillville. Goldie, the star, is taken in by the Martins. Her adventures with the cow at milking time, and with the domestic cook-stove are a scream. She eventually restores the Martins' lost daughter, captures the thief robbing the village bank and marries Zek'l, the bashful village constable. Full of action. All parts good, Goldie the lead, and Zek'l, the bashful lover, being particularly effective.

Price, 25 cents.

SUNSHINE

A Comedy in Three Acts.

By Walter Ben Hare

Four males, seven females. Scene, one simple exterior, easily arranged with a small lot of potted plants and rustic furniture. This charming play was really written to order, to satisfy an ever growing demand for a comedy that could be used either as a straight play or as a musical comedy. The author has arranged a happy and realistic blend of the two types of entertainment, and the catchy tunes which he has suggested should find favor in the amateur field. The story leads the audience a merry chase from snappy farce to real drama (with just a flavoring of the melodramatic) which modern audiences find so pleasing. Here we find a great character part in a popular baseball hero, who succeeds in making a home run in more ways than one, a wonderful leading lady rôle in the part of Mary; a hypochondriac, who finds his medicine most pleasant to the taste; an old maid who mourns the loss of her parrot, and a Sis Hopkins type of girl with the exuberance of spirit that keeps the audience on its mettle. The Major is a character of great possibilities and in the hands of a capable actor much can be made of it. Sunshine is the sort of play that will live for years, as its very atmosphere is permeated with good will toward the world at large. We cannot too highly recommend this play, written by an author with scores of successes behind him and not a single failure. Royalty \$10.00 for the first performance and \$5.00 for each subsequent performance given by the same cast.

Price, 50 cents.

CHARACTERS

MAUDELLA McCANN, *aged ten.*

MRS. BUNCH McCANN, *of Detroit, the mother.*

MRS. SOL WHIPPLE, *of Whipple's Corners, Conn., the country lady.*

MISS TESSIE MITFORD, *the mental case.*

MR. JUBA K. BUTTERNIP, *of Peoria, Ill., the old man.*

MISS GREGORY, *the nurse.*

BUDDY BRADY, *of New York, the ball player.*

MAJOR KELLICOTT, *the speculator.*

JIM ANTHONY, *he's engaged.*

SYLVIA DEANE, *she's engaged.*

MARY, *"Sunshine."*

BOYS AND GIRLS.

SCENE: The lawn at Sunshine Sanitarium, near New York City.

ACT I.—Morning.

ACT II.—Afternoon.

ACT III.—Night.

Time of playing: Two hours.

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